

Jurors hear of killer's 2 sides Life-or-death deliberations to begin in penalty phase for Anaheim gangster.

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SANTA ANA The Orange County jury that convicted an Anaheim gang member of two murders was asked Wednesday to spare him the death penalty and remember Edgar Omar Osorio as a kind boy who grew up in a poor home with an alcoholic father who beat him.

Osorio, now 24, wept quietly as his attorney, Steve Biskar, a deputy public defender, patted him on the back and told the jury about a boy who had so much potential as a child but instead became a gang member after a lifetime of abuse.

Osorio's father was a "monster," Biskar said, who terrorized the family by beating his wife and children with belts as rats and roaches ran around the small Corona apartment.

Biskar asked the jury to sentence Osorio to life in prison without parole, showing some compassion to a boy who had saved his cousin from drowning, helped lead his estranged family back together and was always generous to people.

"We're asking for mercy and justice. Only the victims can forgive, and they're gone," Biskar said.

Prosecutor Howard Gundy described the other side of Osorio, a proud gang member who was a sophisticated criminal looking for street credentials.

Gundy told jurors to remember how Osorio shot Angela King, a 34-year-old Anaheim police traffic-control officer, then choked and stabbed 70-year-old Betty Easley, after each woman walked in on separate burglaries in their homes on one night in October 2000.

Osorio set fire to each apartment, trying to conceal his crime and making each woman and all others in their buildings "collateral damage" in his effort to go free, Gundy said. Remember, Gundy told the panel, that **Osorio** bragged to other gang members that he "smoked that pig" and took the trophy of her wallet, which contained her identification as part of the Anaheim police force.

Gundy told the jury that it's ironic that Osorio is now claiming to be a victim, when he clearly made the choice to commit the murders.

"It's a personal decision. The defendant knows right from wrong," Gundy said. "It's self-taught, and that's why he should be held responsible."

The mother of Angela King, Sophia King of Long Island, N.Y., sobbed during Gundy's closing arguments and finally left the courtroom. Angela King would have turned 39 on Tuesday.

Quoting Edmund Burke about the "triumph of evil," Gundy asked the jurors for a death sentence.

Putting Osorio in prison for life would give him a "volume discount," not enough punishment for two murders, Gundy said.

After receiving instructions from Judge Richard Toohy today, the jury will begin deliberations.